Greening the reds or reddening the greens?

Lucardie, A.P.M.; van der Knoop, J.; Schuur, Wijbrandt van; Voerman, Gerrit

Published in:
Green Politics Three

Paul Lucardie, Jelle van der Knoop, Wijbrandt van Schuur and Gerrit Voerman, 'Greening the reds or reddening the greens? : the case of the Green Left in the Netherlands' in: Green Politics Three, Edinburgh, 1995, 90-111.

Greening the Reds or Reddening the Greens?
The Case of the Green Left in The Netherlands

Introduction

Since the late 1960s party systems in most West European countries have gone through changes - not as cataclysmic as recently in Eastern Europe, of course, but more substantial than in many previous decades. While several old political issues lost salience, new problems gained a prominent place on the agenda: above all, the pollution of the environment and the question of energy resources, but also the quality of democracy, the emancipation of women, immigrants and individual rights. Whilst some established parties took on the new issues and tried to aggregate them with older, material interests, new parties emerged to articulate the new, 'post-materialist' demands in practically every country in Western Europe. Two stages can be distinguished here: the 1960s, and the 1970s and 1980s. In the 1960s, libertarian socialist and radical parties were founded, often by dissidents from established parties, who strove for a New Left which would articulate the new issues without completely neglecting the old ones. In the 1970s and 1980s, green parties sprang up to bring the environmental crisi to the fore; though also libertanian (that is, critical of the state and anxious to preserve individual liberty and autonomy), they tended to place themselves 'beyond left and right'. Like the older parties, the green parties have to face aggregation problems, however, integrating for instance economic and foreign policy issues in their ideological framework.

Five scenarios seem logically possible:

1. Established parties – whether right wing, Old Left or New Left – adapt themselves succesfully, adding a touch of green to their own colour; 'pure green' parties fail to penetrate the party system and remain marginal. Hence the party system will change very little; the traditional cleavages retain their predominance.
2. Green parties penetrate the system successfully, adopting leftis positions with respect to 'old' issues: socialism or reliance on state intervention. As a result, they are pushed or pulled – willingly or unwillingly – to the extreme left of the political spectrum. Thus, the emergence of the new party would not introduce a new dimension into the party system. Left continues to mean 'socialist' or state interventionist, whereas right signifies 'conservative' or '*laissez-faire* liberal'.
3. Green parties conques a position in the party system close to the centre; they may deny the traditional left-right dimension with limited success: the new 'green/grey' cleavage they try to create remains much weaker than the old cleavages based on class or religion.
4. Green parties could turn eco-fascist and identify with the (extreme) right; as a result they would not add a new dimension to the party system - the counterpart of the second option.
5. Green parties gain a foothold while remaining 'pure green', 'neither left nor right', developing a 'third way' beyond socialism and capitalism. Thus, they will add a new dimension to the partysytem, 'ecology versus economy' or 'green versus grey', with cross-cuts the traditional left-right dimension.

A survey of the literature suggests that the first scenario option has been followed in

Denmark and Norway, where the new leftist Socialist People's parties turned green and prevented new green parties from winning any seats (Müller-Rommel, 1984; Schüttemeyer, 1989; Logue, 1982). The second option has been taken by the Greens in Germany, if one ignores the marginal Oekologische Demokratische Partei. The Communist party of Germany had remained rather orthodox Old Leftist and lost significance; while the New Left movement did not penetrate the party system in the 1960s, but seems to have created a fruitful subcultural 'hotbed' for Die Grünen (Langner 1987, pp. 31-59, 81-7; Müller-Rommel 1985; Van Haren 1991). The third scenario could be found - with some qualifications - in Sweden and France (Vedung 1989, 1988; Prendiville 1989). In both countries, strong communist parties fill the extreme left of the spectrum, leaving the Greens' position near the centre. The fourth option exists only on paper, as far as we know. Many rightwing extremist parties may be new, but not green: they mobilize voters on the (relatively new) issue of immigration and pay at best lip-service to the environment, rather than advocate 'eco-fascism'. The fifth option seems characteristic of the fragmented, open party system of Switzerland, where 'pure green' parties compete with 'eco-socialists' and 'alternative-green' parties (Ladner 1989; Kreuzer 1990; Finger and Sciarini 1991).

At first side, the Dutch Green Left should be classified under the second option: the party calls itself left wing; while the pure green Groenen have remained marginal (Voerman 1991). Yet, at second sight, the situation looks more complicated, especially if one looks at the history of the Green Left, which resulted from a merger of four smaller parties in 1990. One of them, the Political Party of Radicals (PPR), founded in 1968, can be considered one of the oldest 'new parties' in the world, though it did not call itself 'green' or 'ecologist' until the 1980s. Almost as new and green, however, appeared New Leftist Pacifist Socialist Party (PSP), founded in 1957. In 1990 these two parties merged with a small Christian group and the old Communist Party into Groen Links (Green Left, GL). In this chapter, we shall try to explain this *rapprochement* between 'reds' and 'greens' in The Netherlands - a process which may occur in other countries as well, even if it does not end in a complete merger. We shall consider historical-political as well as sociological explanations.

Too many studies of green parties have neglected the historical and political context of the countries concerned (see Lowe and Rüdig1986). Hence, the next section of the chapter contains a brief survey of the history of the Green Left and its precursors in the context of the Dutch party system. In the third section, some data will be presented from surveys held at the final party conventions of the four parties which merged into Green Left. The fourth section offers a rather tentative explanation of the birth of the new party; but the reader should be warned, the explanation will be complicated and possibly confusing!

History of the Green Left

The Dutch party system has always been segmented or pillarised. A secular-religious cleavage cross-cut the cleavage between classes. Religious or confessional parties, Catholic as well as Protestant, held a (narrow) majority in parliament until the 1960s. The Catholic party as well as the major Protestant parties were almost always certain of a share of government power, but alternated left-wing and right-wing coalition partners: the Social Democrats (since 1946: PvdA – Partij van de Arbeid, Labour Party) or the Conservative Liberals (since 1948: VVD, Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie).

Between 1946 and 1959 the Social Democrats played a leading role in a coalition government, which laid the foundations for the corporatist Dutch welfare state and ended the Dutch tradition of neutrality by joining NATO and admitting American nuclear arms on Dutch soil. Both policies met with opposition from the Communist Party of the Netherlands

(CPN). In 1946 the CPN enjoyed a good reputation because of its resistance against the German occupation (1940-5) and its connections with Soviet Russia. Before the end of the decade, however, these connections turned from assets into liabilities when the cold war broke out. Between 1946 and 1959 the Communists lost three quarters of their electorate; their share of the popular vote dropped from 10.6 per cent to 2.4 per cent. Even so, the leadership did not waver in its loyalty to the Soviet Union - at least not until 1963, when it refused to take sides in the quarrel between Russian and Chinese Communists. But even in the 1960s and 1970s it maintained its identification with the Soviet model and the bloc of (so-called) socialist states. For pacifists and radical socialists, the 1950s were hard times: they felt betrayed by the Social Democrats - who had been neutralists and often also pacifists before 1940 - and repelled by the Communists. In 1957, this 'homeless group' founded the Pacifist Socialist Party (PSP). It was a motley crowd of Tolstoyan Christians, libertarian socialists and left-wing social democrats (Van der Land 1962). In the 1960s and early 1970s, conflicts between various tendencies led to party splits and loss of support; but eventually an ideological consensus developed around ideas about non-violent defence, socialisation of private corporations under workers' control and emancipation of the individual from traditional (bourgeois) norms and roles (PSP 1982; Lucardie 1980).

Like other New Left parties, the PSP distrusted the (liberal-corporatist) state; socialism had to be built 'from below', in direct action at the grass-roots, at work, in school, on the street; parliament might play a secondary role. Hence the party lent support to any social movement that opposed capitalism and the state. Since the late 1960s, Pacifist Socialists took part in actions against pollution and - a little later - against nuclear power. Women's liberation could also count on sympathy (Brinkman, Freriks and Voerman 1990). Feminism was adopted as a source of ideological inspiration (in 1980); ecologism did not receive quite the same favor. Most important was the peace movement - not surprising, in the case of a pacifist party. To some extent, the electorate of the PSP fluctuated with the size of the peace movement: up in the early 1960s, down in the 1970s, up again in the early 1980s. Peaks were reached in 1981 and 1983, when several hundred thousand people marched against the deployment of cruise missiles on Dutch soil through the streets of Amsterdam and The Hague respectively. It has been estimated that about half of the citizens who had voted for the PSP in 1981 actually took part in the peace march the same year (Schennink, Bertrand and Fun 1982, p40).

Yet the Pacifist Socialists did not monopolise the peace movement, but rubbed shoulders with Social Democrats, Communists and committed Christians on the streets of Amsterdam and The Hague. Some of those Christians voted for the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA), the party into which the Catholic party and the largest Protestant parties had merged in 1980; but others had deserted the confessional fold. The left wing of the Catholic party had already broken away in 1968 and founded the Political Party of Radicals (PPR). At first, the PPR tried to be a left-wing Christian party, wooing the Catholic and Protestant trade-unions. These attempts failed; the new party attracted middle-class intellectuals, social workers, school teachers and professionals - 'the partisans of the poor' rather than the poor themselves (Van Ginneken 1976). Gradually, the party became more secular and more leftwing, in a New Left direction; yet the term 'socialism' remained taboo. Rather than defining its ideology, the Radical party emphasised issues: peace, environment, welfare and democratisation (of social and economic institutions). In the 1970s it sought co-operation with the also somewhat libertarian Democrats 66 (D66) and the Labour Party, which steered a New Leftish course at the time. From 1973 to 1977 the PPR took part in a coalition government with D66, Labour and some of the Christian parties. After 1977 the gap between PPR and PvdA widened, causing a crisis within the Radical ranks. Many of the founders of

the party began to leave (and join the PvdA); its electorate shrank (see Table 1) - as the party shifted towards the extreme left, in the eyes of the voters (Van der Eijk and Niemöller 1983, p. 250). In 1983 the rank and file discussed the future of the party in terms of colours: 'red' wanted to make an alliance with PSP and CPN; 'green' wanted to renew the PPR in a more ecologist direction; 'blue' wished to maintain the old, vaguely Christian identity and to stay close to Labour. None of the tendencies won a clear majority, but 'red' and 'green' reached a compromise. The party defined its identity in the following terms: 'radical, solidary, non-conformist, libertarian and ecologist' (PPR 1983).

In the early 1980s, the Radicals took part in a Green Platform, but were also involved in local and provincial electoral alliances with Pacifist Socialists and Communists (Voerman 1990a). The Green Platform fell apart within a few years; some of its members set up a new green party, called De Groenen (The Greens) since 1988 - but with only marginal membership. The alliance between PPR, PSP and CPN proved more promising: at the elections for the European parliament in 1984, their 'Green Progressive Accord' won 5.6 per cent of the vote, enough for two seats. In 1979, the three parties had presented separate lists and failed to win any seats at all.

Table 1 **Election results of green left parties, 1959-1989 (Parliamentary elections only)**

	CPN		PSP		PPR		EVP		total GL	
	%	seats	%	seats	%	seats	%	seats	%	seats
1959	2.4	3	1.8	2	-	-	-	-	3.2	5
1963	2.8	4	3.0	4	-	-	-	-	5.8	8
1967	3.6	5	2.9	4	-	-	-	-	6.5	9
1971	3.9	6	1.4	2	1.8	2	-	-	7.1	10
1972	4.5	7	1.5	2	4.8	7	-	-	10.8	16
1977	1.7	2	0.9	1	1.7	3	-	-	4.3	6
1981	2.1	3	2.1	3	2.0	3	0.5	0	6.7	9
1982	1.8	3	2.3	3	1.7	2	0.7	1	6.5	9
1986	0.6	0	1.2	1	1.3	2	0.2	0	3.3	3
1989	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4.1	6

Source: Documentation Centre on Dutch Political Parties

The issue of co-operation had come up for consideration because of the heavy electoral setbacks of the three parties at the end of the seventies (see Table 1). It was thought that a joint list might stop the electoral decline and perhaps even attract more voters. Beside this electoral bonus it was conceived that a new united party might draw Labour more to the left. Collaboration of the parties was stimulated by the new social movements which came to the fore at that time: not only the peace movement, but also the environmental movement – which led the opposition against nuclear power – and the women's movement, which fought for legalisation of abortion. Together with these movements PPR and PSP joined hands in extra-parliamentary actions. Party members came across each other in blockades of nuclear plants for instance, or later in the above mentioned large peace demonstrations (Schennink et al.1982; Van der Loo et al. 1984). As a result, old dividing lines between the activists tended to fade and consultations between the executives of PSP and PPR and the new social movements were institutionalized. Initially, the CPN acted independently and organised several actions on its own account. In the early 1980s, however, co-operation between Radicals, Pacifist Socialists and Communists got under way, facilitated by the ideological renewal of the latter. Electoral decline and rejuvenation of cadre had undermined the Marxist

Leninist orthodoxy and discipline of the CPN. The old proletarian cadre was gradually replaced by young university graduates, social workers and journalists with New Left sympathies (Voerman 1990b). After intense debates, the party adopted a new programme in 1984 which rejected Leninism and recognized feminism as a source of inspiration on equal footing with Marxism (Fennema 1988; Lucardie 1985). As a result, a group of orthodox Leninists left the party and founded the Verbond van Communisten in Nederland (VCN - Association of Communists in the Netherlands), which, however, has remained a marginal party.. It has to compete with two other Leninist parties, the Trotskyite Socialist Workers Party and the originally Maoist Socialist Party. Neither of them has seats in parliament, but the latter has achieved some successes in municipal elections. Communists had been willing to make 'progressive coalitions' with other parties long before 1984, provided they could act as 'vanguard'. Now they gave up this ambition - even democratic centralism was renounced - and became acceptable to others (CPN 1984, pp. 11-16). Equally co-operative were the Radicals. Both wanted to include the PSP in an alliance for the parliamentary elections scheduled for 1986. The Pacifist Socialists, however, had second thoughts. Though they had approved of the 'Green Progressive Accord' at the European elections, they rejected a similar alliance at the national level (with a narrow majority of 51 per cent). Thus the three leftist parties presented separate lists at the elections - with disastrous results (see Table 1). Besides, the exodus of membership which had been going on for several years, continued (see Table 2).

Table 2 **Membership of green left parties, 1971-1989**

	CPN	PSP	PPR	EVP	Total
1972	10.000	4.600	3.800	-	18.400
1977	15.300	6.500	13.400	-	35.200
1981	14.400	9.600	10.500	1.800	36.300
1982	13.900	10.000	10.000	2.700	36.600
1986	8.500	6.500	6.300	2.400	23.700
1989	5.700	3.600	6.200	1.500	18.100*

* Membership Green Left, consisting of membership of CPN, EVP, PSP and PPR and the direct members of the Green Left Association (1.100)
Source: Documentation Centre for Dutch Political Parties

As a consequence of the electoral defeat, the autonomist wing of the PSP lost its hegemony within the party; its hard core left the party. At last, the road had been cleared for the merger of the three small left-wing parties; even so, it took three more years, hard negotiations and internal quarrels before an agreement was reached about a common programme and list of candidates for the next parliamentary elections, held in 1989. Environmental issues figured prominently in the programme, but so did social issues like a more equal income distribution. Socialism was not mentioned. The election results of Green Left were not quite as good as expected, but good enough to stimulate further co-operation at local, provincial and national level. In 1990 the Green Left held its first party congress; in 1991, PSP, PPR and CPN held their last conventions and dissolved their organisations. A fourth party was included, too: the tiny Evangelical People's Party (Evangelische Volkspartij, EVP). In 1981 it had been set up by Protestants who regretted the merger of their (relatively) progressive Protestant party with the more conservative Catholics into the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA); as well as small groups of Christian Radicals who did not feel at home in the secular PPR. The programme of the EVP resembled that of the PPR regarding nuclear disarmament,

environmental policies and redistribution of income and power; but was not as libertarian with respect to individual rights (abortion, euthanasia). In 1984 the EVP did not join the Green Progressive Accord - though some members did so *à titre personnel* - but in 1989 the dwindling number of party members decided in favor of joining the Green Left. In 1991 the party also dissolved itself, but maintained an Evangelical Forum within Green Left (Nieboer and Lucardie 1992).

The merger of the four small parties into one medium-sized party may fit in with a trend towards concentration in the Dutch party sytem. In 1980, two Protestant parties had merged with the Catholic Party into the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA). Several small parties, founded in the 1960s and 1970s, had disappeared by 1991. Fractionalisation in parliament declined between 1971 and 1991 from .84 to .74 (Rae Index, see Daalder 1987, p. 199). Even so, the Dutch party system has remained fairly fragmented. The largest party, the CDA, can count on about one-third of the electorate – but holds a pivotal position in the system. The Labour Party (PvdA) used to attract about one-quarter of the popular vote, the conservative-liberal party (VVD) almost one-fifth, while the share of the left-wing Democrats 66 (D66) fluctuates betwee 5 and 15 per cent. These four parties are regarded as *regierungsfähig*, potential government parties. The small Protestant and secular parties of the extreme right as well as Green Left are generally considered permanent opposition parties with at most some indirect influence on the political agenda through the major parties they may try to pressurise. When the PvdA was moving towards the (New) Left, in the late 1960s and 1970s, it was fairly sensitive to this kind of pressure; but since 1981 the Labour Party has slowly shifted towards the centre and turned a cold shoulder to its left-wing neighbours. Their increasing isolation might have encouraged the small left-wing parties to seek more co-operation and comfort among themselves.

The Green Left: an Empirical Survey

With the full support and co-operation of the party executives, the authors of this chapter held surveys at the founding congress of Green Left (November 1990) and the last conventions of PSP (January 1991), PPR (February 1991), EVP (April 1991) and CPN (June 1991).[1] Questionnaires were distributed to party delegates (in the case of PPR, PSP and CPN) or party members, if the congress was open to all and delegation did not take place (GL, EVP). The questionnaires could be filled in and returned at the congress or by post. The response rates varied between around 60 per cent.[2] In this chapter we focus on the data from the four party conventions; though we shall occasionally to the data from the Green Left congress (Lucardie et al. 1991).The questionnaire was designed with the following hypotheses in mind:

1. The merger was perceived as a step towards ideological renewal in a green direction, though electoral (opportunistic) reasons may have played a role, too: united the parties would survive and exercise some influence, divided they might disappear from the electoral map. Yet one would expect the ‘greenest’ members to be the keenest on merging into the Green Left, for ideological reasons.
2. As New Left or left-libertarian parties tend to turn green, according to Kitschelt (1989), Bürklin (1985), De Roo (1991) and others, one might expect the New Left parties PPR and PSP to be 'greener' than the (originally) Old Left CPN; however, even the CPN must have become 'green' to some extent, otherwise it would not have joined Green Left.
3. Ideological convergence might imply a 'greening of the reds', but also a 'reddening of the greens': PPR and possibly EVP might agree with CPN and PSP on nationalisation of private business, the evil of NATO and preference for trade unions over organisations of

employers. Suppose, however, that we should not find any substantial ideological convergence; what other explanations suggest themselves for the merger of ‘reds’ and ‘greens’ in the Netherlands?

4. Under ideological diversity might lie common values, 'post-materialism' as defined by Inglehart (1977), that provide a cultural base for mutual understanding.
5. The merging of the historically rather different parties could be facilitated by social homogeneity; as predicted by Bürklin (1984, 1985), the cadre of the four parties (and the Green Left) might consist predominantly of unemployed or underemployed university graduates; or of non-productive public servants (Alber 1989; Cotgrove and Duff, 1980) or 'communicative workers', 'logocrats', social scientists and the like (Andersen, 1990; Lucardie 1980).
6. Generations might also have an important impact: whereas the older generation Communists, Socialists and Christians kept thinking in terms of cold war and religious cleavages, hence distrusting each other, the younger ones would be more open minded and therefore more interested in a merger.
7. Activists in the new social movements (environment, peace, women) would favor and further the merger for short-term ends rather than ideological principles.

Results

Motivation: A substantial majority of all respondents agreed that the four parties would not survive separately (69 per cent). Of members of EVP and CPN this agreement is not surprising, given the fact that their parties had lost their seats in parliament in 1986; but even 58 per cent of PSP respondents and 54 per cent of PPR respondents seemed to worry about the survival of their parties. An even larger majority of all respondents was convinced that together they would exercise more influence than separately (92 per cent).

Ideological motives may have played an important role, too. About three-quarters of surveyed convention participants expected 'ideological renewal' from Green Left - most of all the Communists (83 per cent), least of all the Pacifist Socialists (57 per cent). The hope for renewal among Communists does not seem surprising after the collapse of 'real existing socialism' in Eastern Europe. More puzzling seems the 'conservative' attitude of the Pacifist Socialists; it might reflect an unshaken, if not dogmatic belief in a fairly coherent utopia - libertarian socialism - which distinguished them from Radicals and Evangelicals, who had never developed a coherent utopia, as well as from the Communists who had believed in 'real existing' rather than utopian socialism. Pacifist Socialists tended to reject 'realism', as indicated by statements like 'Politics is more a matter of getting the best possible out of a given situation than of strictly sticking to principles' (72 per cent disagreed; compare CPN 43 per cent). This more dogmatic attitude of the PSP also throws some light on the question why the party tried to preserve its independence longer than the other three parties. Even at the convention in 1991 19 per cent of the PSP respondents opposed the merger, whereas 6 per cent of the EVP, 3 per cent of the PPR and only 2 per cent of the CPN respondents did so.

People who show little enthusiasm for ideological renewal or for Green Left as such, might be reluctant to embrace a new ideology like ecologism. The question has not been asked directly, as the term 'ecologism' does not have a familiar ring in the Netherlands. Indirectly, the new ideology has been operationalised through statements about economic growth, pollution as the most important problem, the subordination of man to nature and the dilemma between protection of the environment and improvement for the lowest income groups (Table 3, items 2, 6, 7 and 8).

Though the statements seem to reflect the core of ecologism, as described in the literature (Dobson, 199, pp. 13-36; Simonnet 1982), they do not scale very well in our dataset.[3] The

four items are correlated only weakly (Table 4). If we use the items anyway, we find that the respondents who agreed most with all three items did not think more positively about the Green Left than others.

Greening: On the four 'green items' PPR- and PSP-respondents scored significantly higher than the Communist respondents; with one exception: on the last item the CPN did better than the PPR – 68 per cent of its respondents felt that man exists for the benefit of nature - not exactly an orthodox Marxist point of view; however, the implications of this ecocentric statement may not have been fully grasped by all respondents.[4]

Sympathy for environmental groups such as Greenpeace or Defence of the Environment (Milieudefensie; similar to 'Friends of the Earth' in other countries) is very high among Communists, though not as high as among Radical or Evangelical respondents in our sample (Table 5). In fact, the EVP looked about as green as the PPR and greener than the PSP in our survey. Evangelical respondents also showed most sympathy for the marginal (pure) Green Party, another indicator for 'greenness'; Radicals expressed almost as much sympathy for De Groenen, whilst Communists and Pacifist Socialists were significantly cooler.

Reddening: To indicate 'redness', questions were asked about sympathy for (marginal) Marxist parties, for trade unions and employers organisations; about the control of the state over major corporations and membership in NATO - the organisation which defends the capitalist world against communism.[5] Besides, respondents were invited to place themselves on a ten-point scale from left to right. Communist and Pacifist Socialist respondents scored higher on these items than Radicals and Evangelicals - except when sympathy for the Socialist Party was concerned: PSP and CPN were more hostile towards this party, which has pursued populist, at times even sexist and ethnocentric policies. The PSP and CPN activists placed themselves further to the left than the PPR and EVP members (average scores: CPN: 1.5, PSP: 1.6, PPR: 2.2, EVP: 2.8).

Table 3 **Ideology of Green Left. (Percentage of respondents agreeing – or agreeing strongly – with with the statements) (1991 surveys)**

Statements	CPN	PSP	PPR	EVP	Total
1. All major corporations should be controlled by the state	49	71	19	29	40 *
2. Protection of the environment requires that even the lowest incomes should not be raised	14	43	55	42	38 *
3. The Netherlands should leave NATO	85	95	74	79	83 *
4. A basic income should be introduced for everyone within ten years	38	64	96	91	72 *
5. Euthanasia by a physician should always be allowed if a patient so desires	84	92	83	49	79 *
6. Nature does not exist for the benefit of man, man exists for the benefit of nature	68	74	67	68	69 *
7. Should we strive for less or more economic growth to solve environmental problems such as pollution or shortage of raw materials1	28	63	74	85	61 *
8. Pollution is the most important					

problem in the Netherlands	21	31	49	35	35 *

* Variance between parties significant at 1 per cent level or less

1. Respondents could mark their position on a ten-point scale; the percentage in the table refers to those who had marked the first three positions closest to 'less economic growth'.

Post-materialism: Post-materialism, as measured by Inglehart's famous questions, seems quite popular in the Netherlands - and especially among supporters of PPR and PSP (Inglehart 1977; Van Deth 1985, pp. 189-197). Not surprisingly, in our samples 'materialists' were hard to find: merely 1 per cent gave priority to 'maintaining law and order' and to 'fighting inflation' over 'increasing the say of citizens' and 'protecting the freedom of opinion'. Pure post-materialists, who rank the latter two items higher than the former two, made up 74 per cent of our sample.

Surprisingly, Evangelical respondents seemed less 'post-materialist' than others – including Communists; but this may be explained in terms of age and education differences. Perhaps because of the skewed distribution, the 'post-materialism' index did not correlate very well with motivation for the merger.

Social homogeneity: As expected, the four groups surveyed were highly educated and more often employed in public service or education than in the productive sector (trade, industry or agriculture). Yet there were significant differences between them - respondents from the New Left parties PSP and PPR being more educated and less often employed in the productive sector (Tables 6 and 7).

It might be interesting to compare the four Green Left parties with other Dutch parties as well as other green parties elsewhere. The data are not quite comparable, given differences in time and place. Thus the data about other Dutch parties were collected in 1978 and 1979, when education levels in the Netherlands were a little lower than in 1991. Even so, the observed differences are striking. University and college graduates dominated all party conventions, but were even more numerous at those of the Green Left parties than at those of Labour, Christian Democrats or VVD and only similar to D66, a liberal but also greenish party founded by intellectuals. Data about PvdA, CDA ans Liberals come from the European Middle Level Elites Project of 1978/1979 (Middel and Van Schuur 1981, p. 67).

Table 4 **Green statements (correlations)**

Statements	6	7	8
2. (Lowest incomes)	.07	.24**	.31**
6. (Man/nature)	-	.18*	.11
7. (Less economic growth)	-	-	.14*
8. (Pollution most important problem)	-	-	-

* Significant at 5 per cent level

** Significant at 1 per cent level

Table 5 **Sympathy for social movements and other organizations (average scores on a scale from 0=extreme antipathy to 10=extreme sympathy (1991 surveys))**

Organisations	CPN	PSP	PPR	EVP	Total
FNV (Trade Unions)	7.8	6.7	7.2	6.5	7.2
VNO (Employers)	2.4	2.2	3.3	3.2	2.8
IKV (Peace)	6.8	6.5	8.0	8.0	7.3

VMD (Environment)	7.8	8.5	8.9	8.5	8.4
MVM (Women's Lib)	6.4	6.4	7.3	6.4	6.7

Table 6 **Education levels of Dutch party delegates (Surveys of 1991, 1990 and 1978/1979)**

	CPN	PSP	PPR	EVP	GL*	PvdA	CDA	Liberals
Primary level	22	3	8	16	8	27	20	3
Secondary level	15	11	8	20	12	13	19	29
College/university	63	85	82	64	81	58	60	67

* Green Left congress of 1990

Surveys of green party conferences in Belgium, Germany and Great Britain led to similar results: university and college graduates were clearly over-epresented (Kitschelt and Hellemans 1990, p. 100; Poguntke 1990, pp. 38-40; Rüdig et al. 1990, pp. 20-4). According to Alber (1989) and Bürklin (1984, 1985), green party activists are well-educated but under- or unemployed, hence frustrated. Our data do not really bear this out: more than two-thirds of all respondents held paid jobs (at least twenty hours a week), less than 15 per cent were unemployed (including the permanently ill or handicapped) or working less than twenty hours a week; the remaining 18 per cent were retired or working at home without pay (housewives or -men). Among the university or college graduates there were even fewer unemployed than among the less educated respondents.

Alber also expected over-representation of 'producers of services' and under-representation of 'producers of goods' among green party activists (Alber 1989, p. 200). This hypothesis receives some support from our data: very few respondents worked in agriculture or industry, but many in private or public service (including education). In this respect they differ from the Labour party and Christian Democratic respondents of the 1978/1979 surveys, though not drastically (See Table 7).

At present it is difficult to test the hypothesis of Andersen (1990) and Lucardie (1980, 1989) about the affinity between 'communicative workers' or 'logocrats' and New Left or green parties. An indication is provided, however, by the education area of the respondents. About one-quarter of the Pacifist Socialist and Radical respondents had received a degree in the social sciences or a related discipline (political science, psychology, possibly also social work); about the same proportion of Communist respondents had done so, but only 7 per cent of the Evangelicals. In the 1978/79 surveys, 11 per cent of the Labour party delegates, 8 per cent of the Christian Democrats and of D66 and only 5 per cent of the VVD delegates were social scientists. More 'technocratic' and 'bureaucratic' disciplines like (applied or pure) sciences or law were more common among the VVD, D66 and Christian Democrats, but rarer among Labour and the Green Left.

Generations: The majority of all Green Left respondents were in their thirties and forties - but the same was true of Labour, Liberal and Christian Democratic respondents in the earlier surveys. There were significant differences between the Green left parties: whereas two-thirds of the Pacifist Socialist respondents were born after 1950 (hence at most teenagers during the 1960s), 54 per cent of the Evangelical respondents was born before 1940 (hence

already adults in the 1960s). To the '68 generation, if defined as people born between 1940 and 1950, belonged less than one-third of all respondents - and only slightly more within the Radical and Communist contingents.

Though the hypothesis about generational homogeneity has to be rejected, it cannot be excluded that the Green Left activists shared relevant experiences, in the 1970s and 1980s, such as mass demonstrations.

Table 7 **Occupation of Dutch party delegates (Surveys of 1991, 1990, 1978 and 1979)**

Occupation	CPN	PSP	PPR	EVP	GL	PvdA	CDA	VVD
Agriculture and industry	8	2	6	8	5	14	14	18
Transport, commerce private services	8	20	22	18	23	13	19	24
Professions	6	6	2	7	5	3	7	7
Public service and education	39	40	33	13	31	44	38	26
Other branches	10	11	11	12	13	9	11	5
No occupation (incl.students)	28	22	26	43	23	17	12	20
	99%	101%	100%	101%	100%	100%	101%	100%

Table 8 **Green Left active in social movements (Percentage of respondents of each party reporting activities in:)**

Movement	CPN	PSP	PPR	EVP	Total
Environmental	8	20	27	25	19
Peace	17	26	21	26	22
Women	13	3	10	2	8
Labour	32	22	16	16	22

N.B. Percentages do not add up to 100% as respondents may be active in more than one movement or in none at all.

Social movements: As we have seen already, the Green Left activists in our survey showed considerable sympathy for social movements, especially the environmental movement (Greenpeace, Defence of the Environment), to a lesser extent also the peace movement (IKV: Inter-denominational Peace Council, linked to major churches, which initiated the mass actions against cruise missiles in the 1980s), Women's Liberation (Man-Woman-Society, mainly active in the late 1960s and 1970s) and the trade unions (Table 5). As expected, a majority of our respondents was active in one of these movements - though not a very large one (55 per cent). Most active proved the Communists, least active the Pacifist Socialists and the members of the EVP - unless we include the church in our list of movements: more than half the Evangelicals reported activities in a church group.

Even though most Green Left activists were active in a movement, they may never have met each other, as they often seemed to prefer often different movements (See Table 8). The CPN seems to deviate most from the mainstream Green Left. Communists were most active in the labour movement (trade unions, works councils or committees), Pacifist Socialists took to the peace movement, whereas Radicals preferred the environmental movement. The

women's movement attracted only a few activists - probably because women were underrepresented in all Green Left parties, as well as in other Dutch parties. Women made up only 19 per cent of our EVP sample, 20 per cent of the PSP respondents, 30 per cent of our Communist sample and 32 per cent of the PPR group. Their (relatively) strong presence at the CPN congress may reflect the important contribution of feminists to the renewal of the party in the 1980s.

If we compare rank-and-file members at the conventions with executive members and parliamentary representatives, we find that the latter were more active than the former in the environmental movement, the peace movement and the labour movement (in the women's movement the numbers were too small). The differences were, however, only significant in the peace movement. Thus our hypothesis about the contribution of social movements to the formation of the Green Left should not be rejected, even if the evidence seems a little thin.

Conclusions and Interpretations

Organisations tend to merge when they – meaning their leaders - feel threatened by the environment (Caris, Clarijs and Nierman 1986, pp. 31-2). This general 'law' seems to apply to declining political parties, too, such as the CPN, EVP and to a lesser extent even PSP and PPR. Activists of the four parties, surveyed at their final party conventions, often mentioned the threat of the political environment - 'separately we will not survive' - as motive for their merger. Yet the purpose of the merger was not only the preservation of parliamentary seats but also an ideological renewal. The name of the new party, 'Green Left', as well as its manifesto suggested a new, *in casu* green ideology.

Our efforts to operationalize this ideology in our survey met, however, with limited success. A clear and consistent pattern of beliefs did not emerge. Three explanations can be offered for this lack of coherence: a) the respondents had different conceptions of green ideology from ours; b) the respondents agreed on every green item; c) the respondents had not yet given a great deal of thought to the new ideology . There may be some truth in all three. The first explanation cannot be verified here, of course, but requires other techniques such as in-depth interviews. The second explanation seems plausible, but only to some extent: there was agreement on some green items, but not on all. Strangely enough, most agreement existed on the statement 'nature exists not for the benefit of man, man exists for the benefit of nature', which was meant to differentiate between 'pure green' ecocentric ecologists and 'reddish green' anthropocentric eco-socialists (or 'deep' versus 'shallow ecologists'). Quite likely, the third explanation applies to this statement, which has been discussed among Dutch philosophers but probably not among party activists.

If we concentrate on the other green items, we find at least a weak pattern, more or less in the line of our expectations. Activists at the conventions of the PPR and EVP agreed more often with these items than delegates at the PSP congress and significantly more than delegates of the CPN. The 'greening' of the Communists may have started only recently and remained rather spotty. Nevertheless, the delegates at the CPN congress were eager to merge with the greener parties - which may explain why correlations between green items and motivation for the merger were quite low. Communists tended to think more pragmatically than Pacifist Socialists, Radicals and Evangelicals.

Perhaps they also hoped to 'redden the greens' within the Green Left. So far, the 'reddening' process seems to have made some headway: practically all respondents in our surveys placed themselves on the left, if not extreme left; most of them showed more sympathy for trade unions than for employers; almost all of them want the Netherlands to quit NATO and a large number favours nationalisation of major corporations. Members from

EVP and PPR however, objected to nationalisation.

Though there seems to be some ideological convergence between the constituent parties of the Green Left, there is still substantial divergence, too. Important issues such as a guaranteed basic income, euthanasia, priority of environmental problems over economic growth and the redistribution of incomes divide the parties. At best one could observe an 'overlapping consensus', or cross-cutting cleavages which may prevent polarisation: on some issues the Communists take a minority position, on others the Evangelicals, the Radicals or the Pacifist Socialists. Even so, the latter two groups agree more than the others; in a way, they constitute the core of the Green Left - thus confirming our expectations about continuity between the New Left and the Green Left. The (limited) ideological convergence may have been supported by value consensus. Almost all surveyed activists ranked 'post-materialist' values higher than 'materialist' ones. The validity of the value index can, however, be questioned (see for instance Kreuzer 1990; Lowe and Rüdig 1986, pp. 515-20).

Another factor contributing to the *rapprochement* between 'reds' and 'greens' may be social homogeneity. The respondents in our survey did not quite meet our expectations in this respect. The typical New Left and green party activist should be university or college educated and unemployed or employed in education, if not in a social or cultural agency in the public sector. Most of our respondents met the first criterium; a large number, but not a majority, also the second and third. Unemployed university graduates constituted only a small minority, but teachers and (other) public servants were quite numerous, especially among the Communists and Pacifist Socialists. Social scientists - potential 'logocrats' - were also over-represented among those, whereas lawyers and (applied) scientists - potential 'bureaucrats' and 'technocrats' - seemed under-represented, compared with other parties.

In a demographic sense, the Green Left proved fairly heterogeneous. In all parties men were over-represented, 7:3 or even 8:2. Differences were more substantial (and statistically significant) with respect to age. Hence we cannot say that the '68 generation (here defined as born between 1940 and 1950) dominates the new party.

Even if the Green Left activists did not share the same generational experience, they might share other significant experiences. Most of them were active in one or more social movements. They might not have joined the same organisations - Communists preferring the labour movement, Radicals the environmental movement - but possibly they have rubbed shoulders in mass demonstrations, such as the demonstrations against cruise missiles or nuclear power stations.

Thus the Dutch *rapprochement* between 'red' and 'green', Communists and Pacifist Socialists, Radicals and Evangelicals, cannot be explained completely in this chapter. Pragmatic electoral reasons, partial ideological convergence (overlapping consensus), partial social and cultural homogeneity and participation in social movements may all have contributed. At any rate, it has become difficult to disentangle 'red' and 'green' dimensions in the Dutch party system: they are neither complete opposites nor identical twins, but 'quarreling cousins': sharing a similar leftist backgroun, but disagreeing about certain salient issues. Whereas the Old Left or ‘pure reds’(Communist especially) continue to favour economic growth as well as state control of the economy, the ‘pure greens’ (Evangelicals and Radicals, in the Dutch case) defend the latter but not the former.

This may be a general trend in Western Europe (De Roo 1991; Finger and Sciarini 1991; Lauber 1983; Kitschelt and Hellemans). As De Roo predicts, it could be a transitory stage; the 'reds' may die out and give way to 'greens' everywhere. In other words, the fifth scenario described in our introduction might become the most popular one, whilst the first one disappears and the others are taken by one or two countries only. Ideologies do not, however, die like human beings; some kind of socialism may survive the twentieth century anyhow and

may keep quarreling with his younger (and purer) green cousin.

Appendix 1 List of Dutch parties mentioned in the chapter

CDA *Christen Democratisch Appèl* (Christian Democratic Appeal) resulted from the merger of ARP, CHU and KVP in 1980.

CPN *Communistische Partij Nederland* (Communist Party of the Netherlands) founded in 1909 as Soci

D66 *Democraten '66* (Democrats '66) founded in 1966; left-wing liberal party with greenish leanings.

EVP *Evangelische Volkspartij* (Evangelical People's Party) founded in 1981 by left-wing Christian Democrats, joined Green Left and dissolved itself in 1991.

GL *Groen Links* (Green Left) set up as an electoral alliance in 1989, became a political party in 1990.

PPR *Politieke Partij Radikalen* (Political Party of Radicals) founded in 1968 by radical members of the major Christian parties, joined Green Left and dissolved itself in 1991.

PSP *Pacifistisch Socialistische Partij* (Pacifist Socialist Party) founded in 1957, joined Green Left and dissolved itself in 1991.

PvdA *Partij van de Arbeid* (Labour Party) resulted from a merger of Social Democrats with other left-wing groups in 1946.

VVD *Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie* (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy) founded in 1948; advocates (neo-) conservative, freemarket liberalism.

Notes

[1] Funding was provided by the Dutch Foundation for Scientific Research (NWO).

[2] 62 per cent at the Green Left congress (n1=482), 57 per cent at the convention of the CPN (n2=95), 55 per cent (n3=61) at the EVP, 60 per cent at the PPR (n4= 102), 61 per cent at the PSP (n5=65). The EVP seems over-represented in our survey, given its small membership (see Table 2).

[3] The data have been tested with Mokken Scale analysis for Polychotomous items, a programme developed at the 'Dienstencentrum voor Informatieverwerking, Software ontwikkeling en Computer onderwijs' at the University of Amsterdam in 1989.

[4] The statement was a direct quote from the first draft of the Green Left Manifesto, published in 1990; it did not figure in the revised second draft of the manifesto, however, published in 1991.

[5] Admittedly, this interpretation can be contested. Liberals would insist that NATO defends freedom and democracy rather than capitalism; radical leftists would reply that NATO accepted members like Portugal and Turkey which did not meet common standards of freedom and democracy when they were admitted. Whatever the

merit of these arguments, the radical leftist interpretation seems more relevant for our survey. A more serious objection may come from pacifists who would accept capitalism yet reject military organizations such as NATO. Yet in our sample agreement about leaving NATO correlates quite strongly with agreement about nationalization (.476); hence we decided to silence our doubts and to include 'NATO' in our operationalization of 'redness'.

References

Alber, J. (1989). 'Modernisation, cleavage structures, and the rise of green parties and lists in Europe', in: F. Müller-Rommel (ed), *New Politics in Western Europe.* (Boulder: Westview), pp. 195-210.

Anderson, J.G. (1990). 'Environmentalism, new politics and industrialism: some theoretical perspectives', *Scandinavian Political Studies*, Vol. 13, pp. 101-118.

Brinkman, M., Freriks, B., and Voerman, G. (1990). 'Klein links en de nieuwe sociale bewegingen', in: *Jaarboek 1989 Documentatiecentrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen*, pp. 163-188.

Bürklin, W. (1984). *Grüne Politik. Ideologische Zyklen, Wähler und Parteiensystem.* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag).

Bürklin, W. (1985). 'The German Greens: the post-industrial non-established and the party system', *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 6, pp. 463-481.

Caris, J., Clarijs, R. and Nierman, G. (1986). *Fuseren in non-profit organisaties*. (Nijmegen: Dekker & Van de Vegt).

Cotgrove, S. and Duff, A. (1980). 'Environmentalism, middle class radicalism and politics', *Sociological Review*, Vol. 28, pp. 333-352.

CPN (1984). *Machtsvorming voor een socialistisch Nederland: partijprogram van de CPN*. (Amsterdam: CPN).

Daalder, H. (1987). 'The Dutch party system: from segmentation to polarisation – and then?', in H. Daalder (ed.), *Party Systems in Denmark, Austria, Switzerland, The Netherlands and Belgium.* (Londen: Pinter), pp. 193-284.

De Roo, A. (1991). 'Neither Left, nor Right, but certainly not in the Middle', Paper presented to the ECPR Workshop 'Green Political Theory', University of Essex.

Dobson, A. (1990). *Green Political Thought*. (London: Unwin & Hyman).

Fennema, M. (1988). 'The end of Dutch communism? The Communist Party of the Netherlands', in: M. Waller, M. Fennema (eds.) *Communist Parties of Western Europe:*

Decline or Adaptation? (Oxford: Blackwell), pp. 158-178.

Finger, M. and Sciarini, P. (1991). 'Integrating new politics into old politics', *West European Politics*, Vol. 14, pp. 98-112.

Inglehart, R. (1977). *The Silent Revolution. Changing Values and Political Styles among Western Publics*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Kitschelt, H. (1989). *The Logics of Party Formation. Ecological Politics in Belgium and West Germany.* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press).

Kitschelt, H. and Hellemans, S. (1990). *Beyond the European Left*. (Durham: Duke University Press).

Kreuzer, M. (1990). 'New Politics: Just Post Materialist? The Case of the Austrain and Swiss Greens', *West European Politics*, Vol. 13, pp. 12-30.

Ladner, A. (1989). 'Switzerland: the "Green" and "Alternative Parties"', in F. Müller-Rommel (ed) *New Politics in Western Europe*. (Boulder: Westview), pp. 155-175.

Langner, M. (1987). 'Die Grünen im Parteiensystem: radikal, utopisch, links und revolutionär', in: M. Langner (ed.), *Die Grünen auf dem Prüfstand*. (Bergisch Gladbach: Lübbe), pp. 31-59.

Lauber, V. (1983). 'From growth consensus to fragmentation in Western Europe', *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 15, pp. 329-349.

Logue, J. (1982). *Socialism and Abundance: Radical Socialism in the Danish Welfare State*. (St Paul: University of Minnesota Press).

Lowe, P. and Rüdig, W. (1986). 'Political Ecology and the Social Sciences - the State of the Art', *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 16, pp. 513-550.

Lucardie, P. (1980). *The New Left in the Netherlands (1960-1977): A Critical Study of New Political Ideas and Groups on the Left in the Netherlands with Comparative References to France and Germany*, pd. D. thesis Kingston (Ontario).

Lucardie, P. (1985). 'Van Bolsjewisme naar "pluriformisme": de recente programmatische vernieuwing van de CPN', in: *Jaarboek 1984 Documentatiecentrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen*, pp. 61-79.

Lucardie, P. (1989). 'The Liturgy of the logocrats: New Left politics and new middle class interests', Paper presented to the ECPR Workshop "The New Politics and the New Middle Class', Paris.

Lucardie, P., Van Schuur, W. and Voerman, G. (1991). 'De oprichters van Groen Links. Voorlopig verslag van een enquête onder de leden van het congres van Groen Links op 24

november 1990', in: *Jaarboek 1990 Documentatiecentrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen*, pp. 167-185.

Middel, L. and Van Schuur, W. (1981). 'Dutch party delegates', in: *Jaarboek 1980 Documentatiecentrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen*, pp. 61-86.

Müller-Rommel, F. (1984). 'Neue Soziale Bewegungen und 'neue' Parteien in Dänemark und den Niederlanden: eine empirische Analyse', *Zeitschrift für Parlamentsfragen*, Vol. 15, pp. 367-380.

Müller-Rommel, F. (1985). 'The Greens in Western Europe: similar but different', *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 6, pp. 483-499.

Nieboer, M. and Lucardie, A.P.M. (1992). 'Aanschuren tegen het CDA of aansluiten bij klein links? De geschiedenis van de Evangelische Volkspartij' *Jaarboek 1991 Documentatie-centrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen*, pp. 149-167.

Poguntke, T. (1989). 'Green party activists versus voters: are the German Greens loosing touch with the electorate?' in: W. Rüdig (ed.), *Green Politics One.* (Edingburgh: Edingburgh University Press), pp. 29-46.

PPR (1983). *De PPR gaat verder.* (Amsterdam: PPR).

PSP (1982). *Ontwapenend. Geschiedenis van 25 jaar PSP*. (Amsterdam: PSP).

Prendiville, B. (1989). 'France: "Les Verts"', in: F. Müller-Rommel (ed.) *New Politics in Western Europe*. (Boulder: Westview), pp. 87-100.

Rüdig, W., Diani, M. and Franklin, M. (1991). *Green party members: A Profile.* (Glasgow: Delta Publications).

Schennink, B., Bertrand, T. and Fun, H. (1982). *De 21 november demonstranten: wie zijn ze en wat willen ze?* (Nijmegen: Mets).

Schüttemeyer, S. (1989). 'Denmark: "De Grönne"', in: F. Müller-Rommel (ed.) *New Politics in Western Europe*. (Boulder: Westview), pp. 55-60.

Simonnet, D. (1982). *L' écologisme.* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France).

Van der Land, L., (1962). *Het ontstaan van de Pacifistisch Socialistische Partij*. (Amsterdam: Bezige Bij).

Van der Loo, H., Snel, E. and Van Steenbergen, B., (1984). *Een wenkend perspektief: nieuwe sociale bewegingen en culturele veranderingen.* (Amersfoort: De Horstink).

Van Deth, J.W., (1985). *Politieke waarden: een onderzoek naar de politieke waarde-orientaties in Nederland in de periode 1970 tot en met 1982.* (Amsterdam: CT Press).

Van Ginneken, F., (1975). *De PPR van 1968 tot en met 1971*. (Breda: Van Ginneken).

Van Haren, R. (1991). 'De Groenen in de Bondsrepubliek: kortstondige protestpartij of uitdrukking van duurzame verandering?', *Acta Politica*, Vol 26, pp. 3-24.

Vedung, E. (1988). 'The Swedish five-party syndrome and the environmentalists', in: K. Lawson and P. Merkl (eds.) *When Parties Fail*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press), pp. 76-109.

Vedung, E. (1989). 'Sweden:The "Miljöpartiet de Grönna"', in: F. Müller-Rommel (ed.) *New Politics in Western Europe*. (Boulder: Westview), pp. 139-154.

Voerman, G. (1990a). 'Hoe CPN, PSP en PPR van kleur verschoten: van klein links naar Groen Links', *Namens*, Vol 5, pp. 34-39.

Voerman, G. (1990b). 'Een anatomische les: de congressen van de CPN ontleed', T*ijdschrift voor sociale geschiedenis*, Vol 16, pp. 182-199.

Voerman, G. (1995). 'The Netherlands: losing colours, turning green', in D. Richardson and C. Rootes (eds.), *The Green Challenge. The development of Green parties in Europe.* (London: Routledge), pp. 109-127.